

would be completely covered. However the nature of the habitat in which they were feeding precludes this idea.

To check, a week later I asked John Treasure, a young ornithologist who directed my attention to the lake, to send me a note giving the colour of the bird's legs and bill. These agreed with those I had recorded. He also stated that the birds had been present for some months, always being seen around the lake margin.

—ERIC LINDGREN, Shenton Park.

Additional Records of the Gull-billed Tern in Western Australia.

—The status of the Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) in Western Australia has been recently reviewed (J. R. Ford, *W.A. Nat.*, 6, 197). Further records are now available, indicating that the species is apparently increasing in abundance throughout the State.

On May 17, 1959, I saw 6 Gull-billed Terns at Jandakot Lake, about 15 miles south of Perth. Most of the birds were in full eclipse-plumage, the black on the head being confined to the lores and a small area around the eyes. The remainder had, in addition, a few blackish feathers on the crown. Excepting the ends of the primaries, which were a dark grey, and the small amount of black on the head, the plumage was apparently white, and the legs and heavy gull-like bill were black.

With the view of obtaining additional records of the species, Jandakot Lake was revisited on May 23, 1959, May 24, June 21, June 28 and February 7, 1960, when 4, 1, 30, 8 and 2 eclipse-plumaged birds, respectively, were noted. During these visits Marsh Terns (*Chlidonias hybrida*) were observed in flocks up to about 150.

The Gull-billed Tern's method of feeding is interesting and readily assists with its identification when the birds are some distance away when it is difficult to note accurately details of the plumage. From a height of 20 to 30 feet, with tail fanned, wings outstretched and occasional flapping, they glide swiftly down to the surface of the water. The head is then quickly tilted downwards so that the bill is nearly vertical and only the tip touches the water. Then, having seized the prey, the terns gain height rapidly and recommence their slow hawk-like flight around the lake. On no occasion have I observed a tern diving into or settling on the water.

Whilst at Roebourne, in the North-West, in October 1959, I saw 3 eclipse-plumaged birds along the Harding River.

—JULIAN FORD, Attadale.

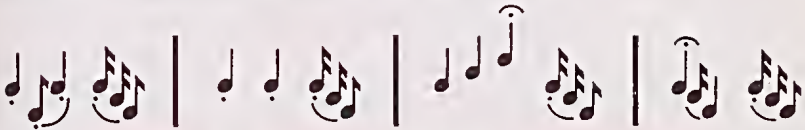
Bristle-bird, *Dasyornis brachypterus*, at Two People Bay.—

On January 1, 1961, shortly after 0600 hours, whilst observing on the access track to Two People Bay, in the vicinity of Lake Gardner, I was attracted by a single, loud, clear, short, but not unmusical note which I set down as "Beep." This was repeated at irregular intervals from positions on or very close to the ground. After watch-

ing for a few minutes, I obtained two brief views of a brown bird with semi-erect wedge-shaped tail.

I then brought my son, Lindsay, from our camp nearby and within a short time we both obtained views of a bird. My own view was particularly satisfactory as the bird was in a very favourable light, and, apparently attracted by my calling, remained in view for perhaps fifteen seconds. My general impression was as before, but I noted, through binoculars, the rich brown, almost chestnut tone of the wings with two or three quills appearing nearly black. Feathers of the nape and mantle appeared light-centred. The bill was dark. I was by that time almost certain that the bird was a Bristle-bird (I had previously encountered the species in Victoria) and looked carefully for the "bristles" surrounding the bill, but these were not discernible.

During these observations, other calls were heard, i.e. (a) a feeding (?) call comprising a muted note oft-repeated, (b) a six syllable call, which I set down as "Ests-per-per (pause) wid-der dit." L.E.S. noting calls at the same time recorded four variants of this call, adding the remarks: "First note, and odd single note, slightly liquid. Sharp, clear tone. Pitch, about that of Spotted Pardalote." His musical notation was as follows:



The habitat of the birds encountered comprised *Agonis* (6-10 ft. high) and *Melaleuca* with *Juncus*, *Ghania* and low shrubs. The area had suffered fire damage at some previous time, but recovery, as indicated by the size of the *Agonis* regrowth, was fairly well advanced. Similar habitat extended over a fairly large area, but was scattered, making the area difficult to assess. A drainage channel traversed the area and the whole was low-lying.

During the morning we examined the area between the track and Lake Gardner, encountering Emu-wrens and Brown Quail in several places. Calls of Bristle-birds extended the observed habitat to an area of c. 180 yards long and c. 80 yards wide, but this was not necessarily comprehensive as similar habitat occurred on the other side of the drainage channel and elsewhere.

--ERIC H. SEDGWICK, Collie.

Varanus semiremex in Western Australia.—The monitor lizard *Varanus semiremex* is but rarely represented in scientific collections and I have never seen a specimen from Western Australia though Glauert (1951: 16) has cited this species as living there. Therefore I reported in my study on the monitor lizards of Australia (1958: 238) that *Varanus semiremex* has never been found outside of Queensland.

To my great surprise I found a fine specimen of *Varanus semiremex* in a collection of reptiles made by Dr. Klaus Immelmann